Community Meals Notes

Senior Services of Wichita

October 2026

Published monthly for the clients of Community Meals.

Move Back to Regular Milk

Milk has switched back from the shelf stable used during the warm summer months to regular Hiland milk. White milk will be served most days, with chocolate served on occasion. Reminder, that to comply with the menu standards set by the Kansas Department on Aging and Disability Services (KDADS) we are required to serve milk with every meal to meet dairy requirements.

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month

(www.nationalbreastcancer.org)

Breast Cancer Awareness Month takes place each year from October 1 to October 31. This time is recognized as a time to increase awareness of breast cancer, emphasize the importance of early detection, and support those affected.

Breast Cancer Awareness Month is an annual, coordinated effort to educate, engage, and take action on behalf of those facing breast cancer – and those who may in the future. It reminds us that breast cancer doesn't wait. Right now someone is getting the news that they have breast cancer and doesn't know what to do next. Some are starting treatment and need support to make it through.

The first Breast Cancer Awareness Month occurred in October 1985 as an awareness campaign led by the American Cancer Society. In 1992, the pink ribbon emerged as the universal symbol for breast cancer awareness and fundraising efforts. Since then, Breast Cancer Awareness Month has expanded across the nation and world, with a focus on promoting early detection, reducing stigma around breast cancer, and supporting patients and survivors.

Since the first Breast Cancer Awareness Month more than 40 years ago, breast cancer death rates in the U.S. have dropped by 44%. It's not a coincidence that greater awareness, increases in early detection, and advancements in treatment have coincided. These efforts show that when we raise awareness, we can save lives.

Breast Cancer Risk Increases with Age – *Making Awareness, Regular Screenings, and Early Detection Crucial for Seniors*

(Co-pilot search)

Seniors face unique risk factors for breast cancer. Age is a primary factor, with nearly half of all diagnoses occurring in women over 65. Other contributing factors include family history or genetic mutations such as BRCA1/BRCA2, prolonged exposure to estrogen, obesity, alcohol use, lack of physical activity, and previous cancers or radiation therapy to the chest area. Awareness of these risks help seniors and caregivers take proactive steps toward prevention and early detection.

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Produce Spotlight: Carrots

By Isabelle Meyer, M.S., R.D

Nutrition Notes

Autumn is a great time to enjoy carrots. This root vegetable can be eaten raw or cooked. Cooking carrots brings out their natural sweetness. Carrots are a good source of fiber, which supports digestion and feeds the healthy bacteria in your gut. Carrots contain an antioxidant that your body can turn into Vitamin A. Vitamin A helps support your vision and a healthy immune system. Carrots also provide potassium, a mineral that helps support healthy blood pressure.

Recipe: Oven Roasted Carrots

Ingredients:

- 2 tablespoons oil
- 1 lb baby carrots
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- 1-2 teaspoons smoked paprika

Directions:

Preheat your oven to 425°F. Line a baking sheet with foil. Place the baby carrots on the pan. Add oil and seasoning. Toss together until the baby carrots are evenly coated. Bake for 25-30 minutes, shaking halfway through. The carrots are done when they can be easily pierced with a fork.

Recipe adapted from Salad in a Jar.

Breast Cancer Risk Increases with Age – Continued

Early detection significantly improves treatment outcomes. Seniors should continue regular mammograms, with most health organizations recommending screenings at least until age 74, and decisions beyond that should be individualized based on overall health and life expectancy. Clinical breast exams and self-examinations area also important. Seniors should monitor for changes such as lumps, skin dimpling, redness, or persistent pain in the breast or underarm area.

Treatment options for seniors may include surgery, radiation, chemotherapy, hormone therapy, or targeted drugs. Age and functional ability are important factors in determining the safest and most effective treatment plan. In-home caregivers and medical home health services can support seniors during treatment by assisting with daily care, medication management, mobility, and transportation to appointments.

Practical Tips for Seniors

- Stay informed about personal risk factors and family history.
- Schedule regular mammograms and clinical exams.
- Perform monthly self-exams and report any changes promptly.
- Maintain a healthy lifestyle with regular exercise and balanced nutrition.
- Utilize community resources, support groups, and in-home care services when needed.
- Engage in awareness activities to stay connected and informed. By combining education, proactive screenings, and support care, seniors can significantly improve early detection and treatment outcomes, empowering them to take control of their breast health.

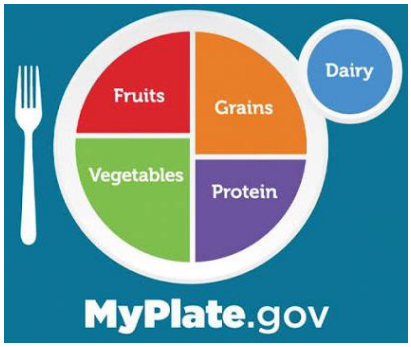
Eating to Support Your Immune System

By Isabelle Meyer, M.S., R.D

October often marks the start of cold and flu season. Good nutrition can help support your immune system. The best way to support your immune health is to eat a balanced diet, get enough nutrients, and take care of your gut. Supplements may also be helpful for some people, but supplements require guidance from a healthcare professional.

Eat a Balanced Diet

One of the best ways to support your immune system is to eat a variety of foods. MyPlate is a helpful guide for building balanced meals.



Try these tips:

- Fill half your plate with fruits and vegetables.
- Choose lean meats, fish, beans, nuts, seeds, and soy foods for protein.
- Make at least half of your grains whole grains, such as whole-grain bread, oats, quinoa, and barley.
- Eat a variety of foods throughout the week to get different vitamins and minerals.

Support Your Gut Health

Did you know your gut is home to billions of tiny living organisms? These include bacteria that can help support your health. Your diet can affect the balance of bacteria in your gut.

Probiotics are helpful bacteria found in some foods. Try foods such as Greek yogurt, kefir, kimchi, sauerkraut, and tempeh.

You can also eat foods that feed the helpful bacteria in your gut. These foods contain prebiotics. Fruits, vegetables, whole grains, beans, nuts, and seeds are good choices.

Eating a variety of plant foods is a great way to support gut health. Try to eat 30 different plant foods each week. This may sound like a lot, but small amounts count! Fruits, vegetables, grains, beans, nuts, and seeds can all be part of your total.

Supplements

Some vitamins and minerals may help support immune health in certain situations. Zinc may help shorten a cold when taken soon after symptoms start. Regular vitamin C supplementation during cold season may help slightly reduce cold symptoms or shorten a cold. Vitamin D is also important for immune health, especially if your vitamin D level is low.

Always talk with your doctor or registered dietitian before starting a new supplement. They can help you decide if a supplement is needed and what amount is right for you.

Frequently Asked Questions

When are meals provided?
Meals are provided Monday through Friday, with exceptions for holidays, inclement weather, or events planned at the meal site. These will be communicated well in advance.

Can someone else join me to eat a meal who isn't approved for Community Meals?
Yes. If you know someone plans to join you, please let the Community Meals site manager know in advance. Guests under age 60 are welcome to attend but will be asked to pay a set cost for the meal. Site managers can provide the current guest meal price.

For more information contact Marla at 267-0122 ext: 215 or visit our website at https://seniorservicesofwichita.org/community-meals/

OCTOBER 2026 MENU

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Milk is Served with Every Meal			1 Sliced Andouille Sausage Mashed Potatoes w/ Gravy Green Beans Wheat Roll Apple Pie	2 Chicken Spaghetti w/ Alfredo Sauce Spinach Whole Grain Roll Mix Fruit Cup
5 Breaded Fish Patty Seasoned Succotash Diced Beets Dinner Roll Papaya Mango	6 Chicken Ala King Brown Rice Buttered Carrots Wheat Roll Mixed Fruit Compote	7 Herb Roasted Turkey Mashed Potatoes w/ Gravy Seasoned Corn Whole Grain Roll Pineapple Chunks	8 Ham & Cheese Sandwich on Wheat Hoagie Bun Pea Salad w/ Red Pimentos Potato Salad Fruit Cup	9 Cheesy Baked Penne Rigate Pasta w/ Meat Sauce Capri Veggies Wheat Roll Cherry Cobbler
12 Herbed Baked Chicken Sweet Potato Tots Green Beans Whole Grain Roll Emerald Pears	13 Santa Fe Pork Cubes Mexican Rice Fajita Blend Vegetables Wheat Roll Mandarin Oranges	14 Baked Fish Sandwich w/ Cheese on Whole Wheat Bun Baby Baked Yukon Steamed Veggies Pineapple Cup	15 Turkey Rice Casserole Roasted Broccoli Garlic Toast Apple Crisp	16 Beef Macaroni Casserole Fiesta Corn Whole Wheat Roll Tropical Fruit Cup
19 Chicken Jambalaya Mixed Vegetables Corn Muffin Escalloped Apples	20 Meat Loaf w/ Brown Gravy Garlic Mash Potatoes Green Beans Whole Grain Roll Cherry Crisp	21 Tuna Salad Sandwich on Croissant Marinated Tomato Salad Banana Pudding	22 Turkey & Swiss Sandwich on Wheat Bread Coleslaw Carrot & Raisin Salad Peaches & Cream Parfait	23 Scalloped Ham and Potatoes Brussels Sprouts Corn Bread Apricots
26 Beef Marsala Parslied Noodles Tuscan Blend Wheat Roll Fruit Cocktail	27 Pork Roast Mashed Potatoes Spinach Whole Grain Roll Fruit Gelatin	28 Santa Fe Chicken Red Potatoes Green Beans Blueberry Crisp	29 Beer Battered Alaskan Cod Macaroni & Cheese Mix Vegetables Whole Grain Roll Mandarin Oranges	30 Turkey Salad Sandwich on Whole Wheat Bun Shred Broccoli w/ Cole Slaw Pasta Salad Mixed Fruit

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